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February 5th

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Photo by: Judy G

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OKLAHOMA PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY FEBRUARY 5 MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT

By Victor Gorin

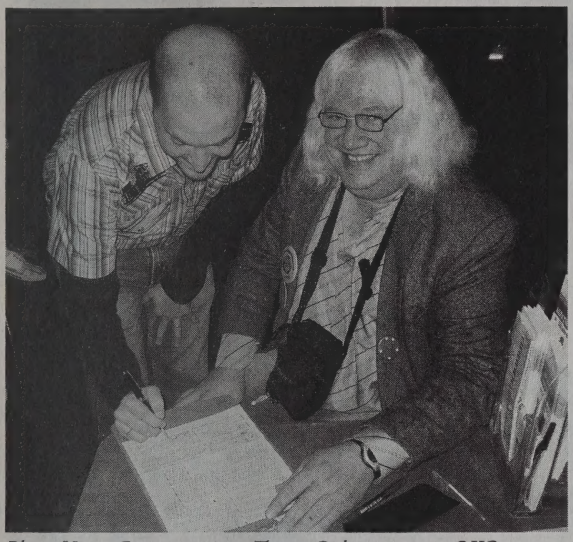


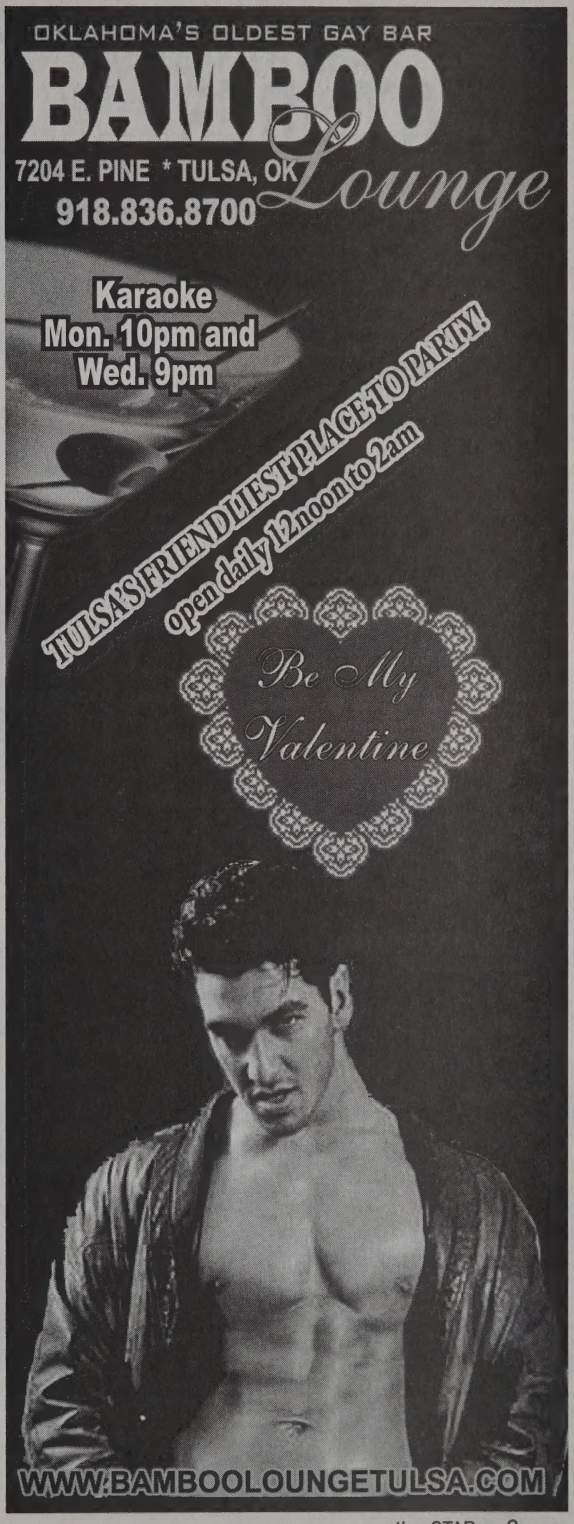
Photo: Victor Gorin registering Thomas Bishop to vote in OKC

If you are registered as a Republican or Democrat in Oklahoma, soon it will be time to cast your vote to select your party favorite for our next president. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. and your polling place is on your voter card. You may vote early from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Friday February 1 and Monday February 4, and from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. Saturday February 2. Call your local election board for your early voting site.

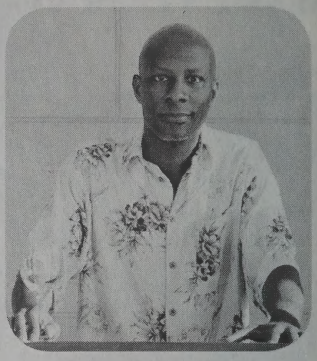
If you have lost your voter card, you may still vote if you are registered, and this you can find out by calling your local election board, who can also provide your polling place. In Oklahoma County that number is 713-1515, Tulsa County 596 5787.

Although they appear on the Democratic ballot, 2 candidates have dropped from the race, Bill Richardson and Christopher Dodd. On the Republican ballot, Tom Tancredo appears on the ballot even though he has dropped from the race.

Independent voters cannot vote for a presidential candidate in this Oklahoma election. However, you may have school board races that you can vote for, so be sure to check that out. Vote February 5 and make our voice heard.



FEATURES



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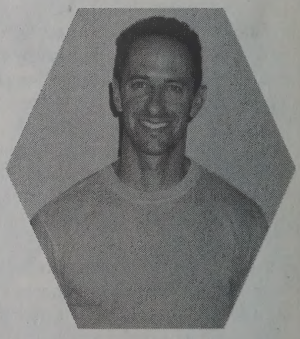

ON THE COVER: Czar I Phillip Parker & Czarina I Kris Cherri Kohl

The History of Saint Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day started in the time of the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honour Juno. Juno was the Queen of the Roman Gods.and Goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the Goddess of women and marriage. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.The lives of young boys and girls were strictly separate. However, one of the customs of the young people was name drawing.

On the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often, they would fall in love and would later marry. Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that Roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements in Rome.

The good Saint Valentine *(photo above)* was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. He and Saint Marius aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February, around the year 270. At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom indeed, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honour of a heathen god. On these occasions, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed.The pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome endeavoured to do away with the pagan element in these feasts by substituting the names of saints for those of maidens. And as the Lupercalia began about the middle of February, the pastors appear to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feast.

So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year, arose in this way.

Joplin Gay & Lesbian Center To Hold Valentines Fundraiser

JOPLIN, MO (P/R) __ In support of equal civil marriage for gays and lesbians and "Freedom To Marry Week", the Joplin Gay and Lesbian Center invites the GLBT community to a Valentines reception and dance February 14th, 2008 7:00 pm to 1:30 am. The event will be held at Groove Lounge, 2331 East 7th Street in Joplin. Dance to the music of the house DJ, enjoy a Wedding Cake and cash bar.

A $5.00 donation per person at the door will go to support the Joplin Gay and Lesbian Center. For more information contact Director Lee McDaniel 417-622-7821 or email gaylesbiancenter@gmail.com Website www.myspace.com/gaylesbiancenter

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Commentary

by Jim Nimmo

OKC Mayor Proclaims Acceptance of GAYS and LESBIANS

In addition to loosing weight is he getting a homo-friendly face-lift?

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK __ Oklahoma City Mayor Cornett proclaims an official day for Ellen DeGeneres's birthday and this is coming from a man who previously never meet a gay man or woman he liked. Well, I have a bridge in Brooklyn, too.

When it's Cornett's political agenda being advanced then he's comfortable with appearing on the famous lesbian Ellen DeGeneres's TV show as he did on January 17th.

Could his self-serving appearance also have anything to do with the National Conference of Mayors having their 2010 annual meeting in OKC?

Is he trying to get a homo-friendly face-lift as well as lose weight in order to make himself more attractive for re-election? Did his failed attempt at running for Congress show him the error of his ways or just point him to another snake-oil strategy?

Now, in order to show that Mayor Cornett is exercising all his Christian sincerity of turning the other cheek, will he propose a human rights commission with legal force that can be approved by the City Council so that cases of gay/lesbian harassment and discrimination can be handled with respect and the intention of making life better for all of OKC's taxpaying citizens?

I'm not a Christian and I've turned both of my cheeks, upper and lower, for the last time to self-serving politicians who use gay people for their own ends and then dispose of them like a fast food clam shell.

Just How Vulgar Will a Desperate Candidate Get?

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK __ Not wanting to get too explicit about basic human sexual techniques, I can't help notice that so much of human disagreement at a low level of public conversation comes down to either analogous or physical illustrations of body penetration in a sexual context.

We've seen with Mike Huckabee, a man who wants to lead one of the most powerful countries in the world, that he's willing to stoop to a low level of vernacular public language in order to attract the flat-earth variety of voter who believes in a geo-centric 6,000 year-old earth. His remarks about putting a flag pole where the sun doesn't shine regarding the South Carolina Confederate flag controversy is one example.

The instance of Huckabee's rallying mantras is a perfect example that he, suffused with the self-reflecting love of his self-constructed Jay-sus, is not immune, rather he uses it knowingly to inflame his redneck followers to greater heights of cooperation in their own submission to the destructive force of religion.

Yes, human power can operate at the lowest level of human respect for those who disagree with us and the fastest way to connect with many people is to graphically use the example of rape towards the perceived enemy. A frustrated Vice-president Dick Cheney used the same tactic in referring to Senator Patrick Leahy with a vulgar act of self-stimulation in the Senate chamber.

Just as violent rape of women by men is described as an attempt at power, with nothing to do with lust, so is the use of sexual penetration by antagonists used to inculcate their ideas of power and superiority at the basest level of human society.

A thinking voter should reject such a candidate immediately.

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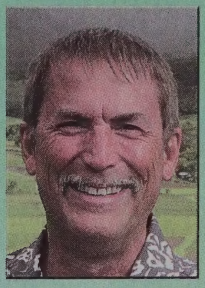

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A Night in the Palace of Versailles

by Joey De

Photo Above: Czar I Phillip Parker & Czarina I Kris Cherri Kohl

TULSA, OK __ Playing dress up may be child's play, but for the Royal Green Country Barony of All of Oklahoma, it is a welcomed break to hours of hard work.

A member of the International Imperial Court System, the RGCBAO is a philanthropic organization with a government system and titles inspired by Victorian Royalty. In an Adornment Ceremony at the Holiday Inn Select in Tulsa on Jan. 12, the RGCBAO crowned their first Czar and Czarina, Phillip Parker and Kris Cherri Kohl (respectively).

Nicole the Great, Queen Mother of the Americas

A non-partisan organization, the Royal Green Country Barony of All Oklahoma seeks to further the mission of the International Court System by uniting not only the gay community, but the entire community of Oklahoma, gay and straight, regardless of ethnicity or other discriminating factors. The barony works to raise funds for charitable causes and work for equality within the realm it covers.

To begin the evening, Nicole the Great, Queen Mother of the Americas, welcomed Oklahoma into the international family and described what they had "gotten themselves into."

"You see all this (pageantry) and wonder about it, remember it's all in camp. We may call each other Barons and Baronesses, but we are all equals," began the matriarch, who explained the organization's pre-Stonewall San Francisco founding. She described the court system as one of the oldest and largest organizations in GLBT history. "When a gay man, Jose, declared that he wanted to be called an 'Empress' after being crowned the queen of the Tavern Guild's drag ball, he didn't know what he started at the time."

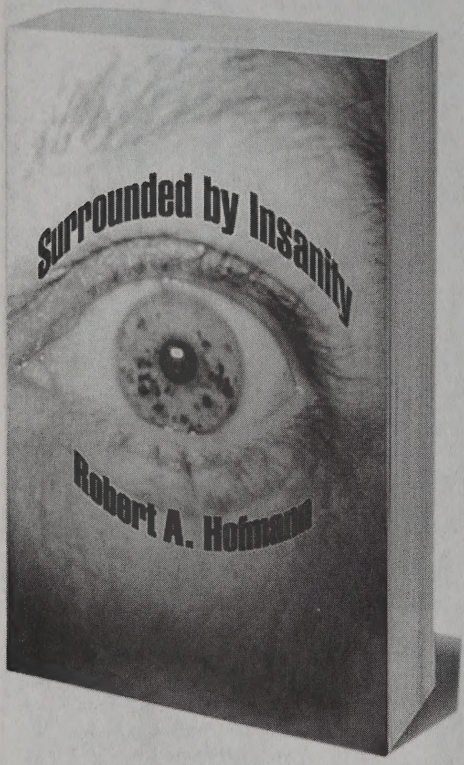
Through out the course of the evening, many other individuals who contributed to the founding of the RGCBAO were recognized, as well as those who have assumed leadership positions in the organization. This included the Privy Counsel (Board of Directors) comprised of Deb Starnes, Jim Ray, Scot Brown, Marc Acuff, and Lynn Whitley. Additionally was the Crown Grand Marquis Roger Francis and Crown Grand Marquesa Dominique La Rue. Also acclaimed as a key founder was Christian Cherri O'Donely Vaughn LaFleur Dior.

Entertainment for the evening was provided by entertainers from across Oklahoma and beyond. This included the cast of "Twisted Theatre," Tim Conroy, Catia Lee Love, Empress The Lovely Suzanne, Empress Syren Vaughn, Empress Victoria Weston, Matthew Heath Fitzgerald, Tabitha Taylor, Rebbeca Tucker and Leonard Jenkins.

Through all the dresses and crowns, the evening assumed a sense of decorum, but through the words of those on stage, it maintained a level of fun and frivolity that turned it into a true celebration. By the end of the evening, the Royal Green Country Barony of Oklahoma had demonstrated that they knew how to have a good time, but had made it clear they were ready to begin the hard work of providing leadership to and creating unity among the citizens of their relm.

Book Review

By Donald Pile and Ray Williams



" Surrounded by Insanity"

by Robert A. Hofmann

We have just read a new book, "Surrounded by Insanity" by Robert A. Hofmann and it is one of those books that once you begin reading it, you won't want to put it down until you have completely finished. It is absolutely hilarious! It is a biographical story of the author's experiences thru his life with his early childhood and growing up with friends and family. Robert grew up in New Jersey and what a wild and crazy and wonderful life he has had. Between his family and his friends, he guides the reader thru many exciting episodes of his life. It is wickedly bitchy and hilarious! Everyone in Robert's life so far is a participant in this wonderfully funny and provocative story of his life. It begins with his birth and goes thru two years ago when he was staying at the wonderful Grand Resort in Ft. Lauderdale when Hurricane Wilma hit in 2006 leaving everybody without power for several days.

This is a "must read" for gay men all over the country. You will laugh at nearly every page! Robert knows exactly what his readers want to hear and he writes in such a great way. He writes openly what many of us say behind our backs. One of our favorite parts of the book is when he talks about "prespeaking", as in, "Dinner. That is where we should go" and "Glad for you! That is what I am." Days after reading this, we are still catching ourselves "prespeaking". Hopefully we and our friends will get tired of it eventually but it is fun for a while.

We don't know if his family and friends are still speaking to him or not but they should be happy that he loves them so much that he can be so open and frank about them. He would indeed be a good friend of have. Hopefully we will get to meet him sometime in the near future. He left some extra copies of his book at the Grand Resort for guests to read and everyone can't wait to get their hands on his book. We promise that you will laugh your head off page after page after page.

"Surrounded by Insanity" is published by Publish America and may be purchased through all major bookstores (if they don't have it in stock, they'll order it for you) or from www.amazon.com or www.publishamerica.com . We didn't want the book to end but thankfully, Robert is already in the process of coming out with his second book. As Robert says, " I live in fabulous, flaming, freakin' New Jersey. Woo-hoo. I am an attorney by day, writer by evening, superhero in the bedroom." Just keep up the great writing Robert!

CLUB MAJESTIC TULSA TO HOST MR. OKLAHOMA CONTINENTAL 2008 PAGEANT

By Greg Steele

TULSA, OK __ Hot bodies and great talent will be the main course at Club Majestic Friday February 15th at 9pm. The show will feature an all male contest with guest entertainment from across the country. The feature entertainer will be Rasean Montrese Mr. Continental Nationals 2007 and hosted by Danielle Hunter Miss Continental Elite Nationals 2007.

In addition to the contestant line up an impressive array of talent will be on stage to make your Friday Night at Club Majestic an evening to remember. Mr. Oklahoma 2007 Sevion Simpson, Mr. 2006 Nationals Simba Hall, Miss Oklahoma Continental 2007 Adrianna and introducing Mr. 2005 Nationals Tony DeSario.

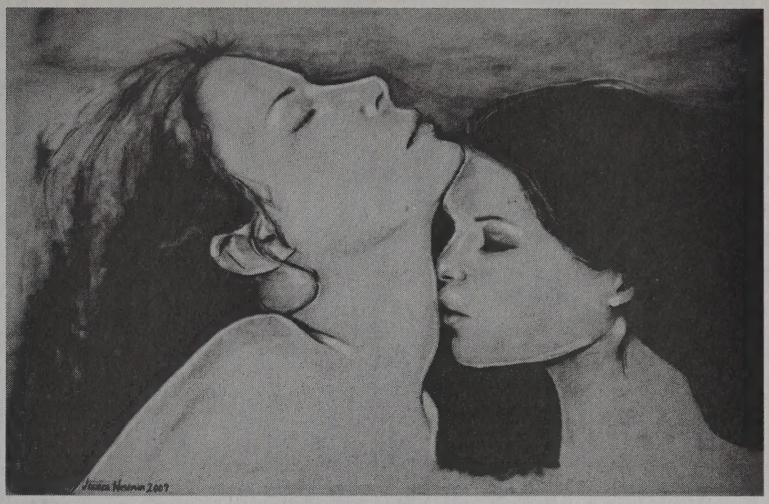
Club Majestic is located at 124 N. Boston in the Brady Arts District.

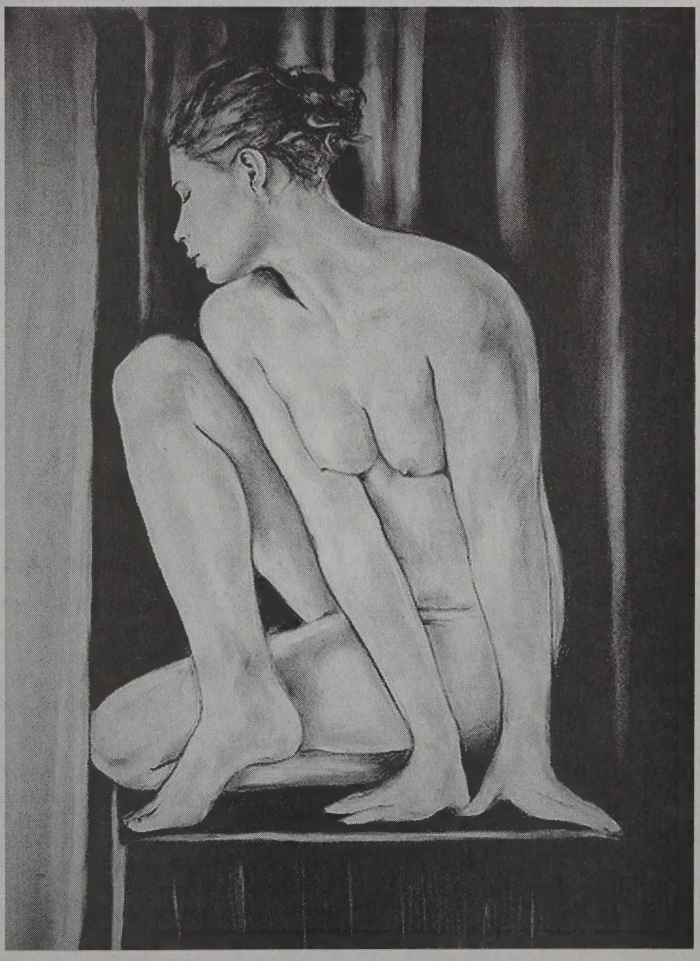
Quotable Quotes

The latest on Britney Spears is that she is in training to become a high profile lesbian, being coached by famous lesbian convert Ellen DeGeneres. DeGeneres told the website www.thespoof.com "Britney is making great progress. I have every confidence she will make an excellent lesbian in time"

ART

Jessica Newman art exhibit at Dennis R. Neill Equality Center





(TULSA, OK (P/R) __ The Dennis R. Neill Equality Center art gallery will host its monthly First Thursday meet-the-artist reception from 6-9pm, Thursday, February 7, 2008, for the opening of it's February exhibit, featuring oil paintings and fine drawings by artist Jessica Newman.

Newman, born in California in 1985, has been a resident of Tulsa since the age of 10. Jessica started drawing at a very young age, and really became involved in art during high school, when she took her first art class in the ninth grade. This is where she was introduced to a variety of art supplies, and began experimenting with different media. Since graduating high school in 2003, she has continued studying art in college, and plans on graduating as an art major.

Jessica has always been fascinated by the human body, which is the theme of most of her work. She currently works with pencil, watercolors, and oil paints, but charcoal is her medium of choice. Her art has been shown at the Mayfest Youth Gallery, as well as at the Blue Dome Arts Festival.

The exhibit will remain up through the month of February, and can be viewed Monday thru Saturday from 3-9pm. The Dennis R. Neill Equality Center is located at 621 E. 4th St., in downtown Tulsa. More info can be found on the web at okeq.org.

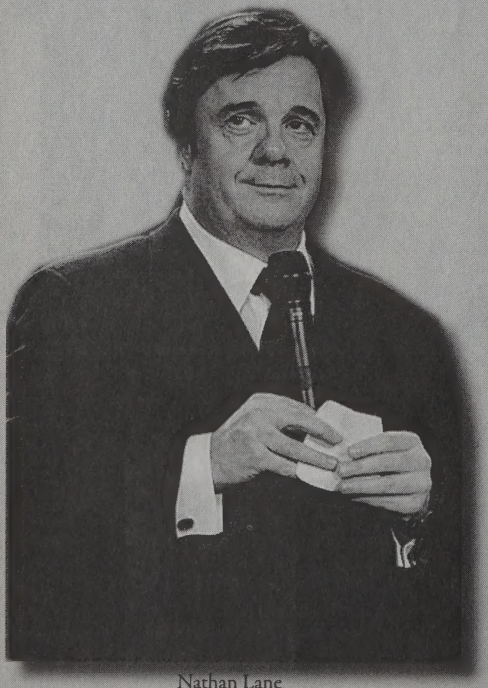
This monthly event is hosted by Oklahoman's for Equality (OkEq). OkEq seeks equal rights for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) individuals and families through advocacy, education, programs, alliances, and the operation of the Dennis R. Neill Equality Center.

Deep INSIDE HOLLYWOOD

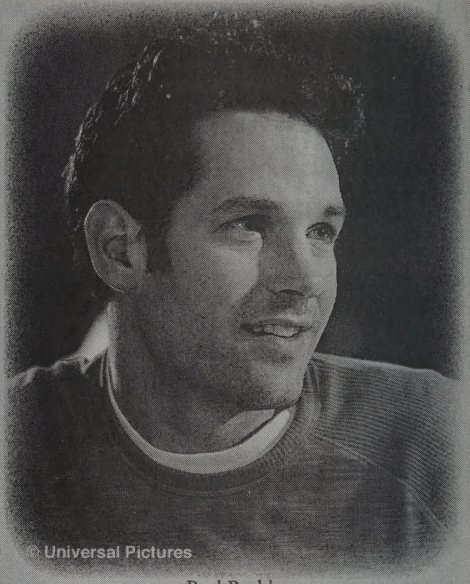
Deep Inside Hollywood, reports on new projects for Paul Rudd and Nathan Lane.

Nathan Lane Casts Swing Vote

He's acting up a storm on Broadway right now with Laurie Metcalf in the new David Mamet play, November, but stage fixture Nathan Lane will be back on the big screen this new year, too, with a role in the ensemble comedy Swing Vote. Starring Kevin Costner as a low-achieving, apolitical American citizen, the movie concerns a presidential election that hinges entirely on Costner's not-entirely-well-informed vote and the national chaos that results from it. Lane will co-star, along with Dennis Hopper, Stanley Tucci, Kelsey Grammer, George Lopez, Mare Winningham, Willie Nelson, and political commentator Arianna Huffington as herself. Already wrapped, the film - if audiences vote for it with their ticket dollars - could find itself increasing poll turnouts. But not likely.



Nathan Lane



Paul Rudd

Paul Rudd Says I Love You, Man

Does the success of Superbad and its teenage protagonists expressing love for one another - however drunkenly - signal the beginning of a trend in the comic treatment of heterosexual male intimacy? Is this the age of the "bro-mantic comedy"? The new movie, I Love You, Man, makes that look likely. Co-produced by Judd Apatow (Knocked Up) and starring Paul Rudd (whose willingness to "go there" with gay-related subject matter in films like The Object of My Affection and The 40 Year-Old Virgin is well documented), the film centers on an engaged man who finds himself without a best man. He has to find a male friend he considers close enough to fill that position. Expect a lot of mock dating situations as the poor straight guy navigates gay(ish) waters. Shooting this spring, here's hoping it's better than I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry. Like that'll be hard.

Addams and Mapa Make Transamerican Love

It was just a matter of time, really. Get ready for Transamerican Love Story, a reality dating show feature Calpernia Addams, a 36-year-old transgendered woman (whose life and tragic relationship with an Army private inspired the TV movie Soldier's Girl). Addams will be the object of affection for a group of men competing to date her - all of whom will know about her formerly male body. Contrast that to the U.K. series, There's Something About Miriam, on which the male contestants were not told about Miriam's transgender status, and the new concept marks a bold step for the reality television genre. Actor and stand-up comic Alec Mapa will host the show that's just been given the green light by gay cable channel Logo. The dating game begins later in 2008.

next page

DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD

Choosing America's Prom Queen

For further evidence that pop culture is now dominated by entertainment designed for the High School Musical demographic, look no further than America's Prom Queen. ABC Family has given the go-ahead for the new series that will pit a group of high school-aged young women against each other in the quest to be the fairest prom queen of them all. The contestants will reside in a mansion and compete in challenges that will show if they've got what it takes to wear a tiara in public and wave at less popular people; then they'll stay or go based on viewer votes. But Romeo has one complaint: in an era when young men are routinely making the news after being voted prom queen at their school, why no boys allowed?

Romeo San Vicente - while in high school, mind you - was very popular with his share of prom kings. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

Regional MCC Churches Perform An Act Of Kindness In Tulsa

JOPLIN, MO (P/R) __ MCC United in Tulsa , OK was visited by Diva's with Chain Saws as members of MCC of the Living Springs, Eureka Springs , AR and Spirit of Christ MCC; Joplin , MO arrived Saturday morning the 12th of January ready to work.

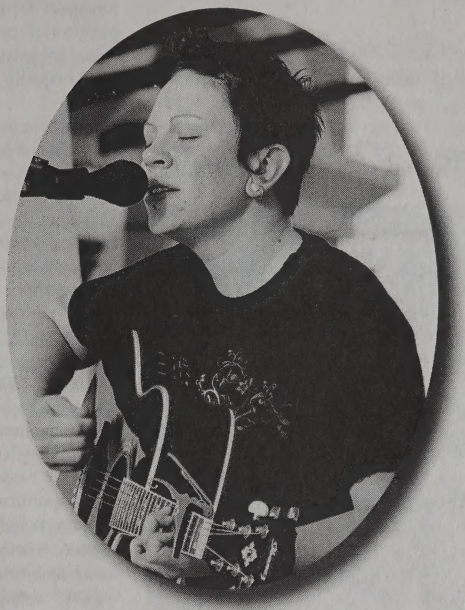
MCC United has been dealing with damage on their property since an early December ice storm devastated the area. There were still damaged trees that needed to be reduced to manageable size and trees that were potentially dangerous if not removed. Together with members of MCC United and their Pastor, Rev Carolyn Mobley the three churches were able to make short work of the remaining damage control and clean-up.

Spirit of Christ MCC literally closed their doors and moved their worship to a program Rev Steve calls: "Faith in Action." "We are an oddity in MCC Churches in that we worship on Saturday mornings. As it is, we are known to replace worship with taking on Acts of Random Kindness to show what we believe is primary for us. As Christ served all people in need… so should we." Rev. Urie also pastors MCC of the Living Spring in Eureka Springs , AR and when he shared the needs he immediately received e-mails saying we are going with you."

We were totally blessed inasmuch as we had four chain saws in action, limbs falling and people picking up the grounds with no injuries and everyone home safely. The group was blessed with a wonderful lunch provided by MCC United and a musical Thank You provided in song by Rev. Carolyn.

Across Regional boundaries and State Lines we can all work together serving God by serving each other.

Lesbian Musician Julie Schurr to Perform in Eureka Springs, Fayetteville and New Orleans.



EUREKA SPRINGS, AR __ Growing up, Julie Schurr never heard music that might have made life a little bit easier for a lesbian girl being raised in the strictly-proscribed constraints of a religiously conservative community and home. In fact, she wasn't supposed to be listening to music at all. She wasn't supposed to know what a lesbian was. Let alone BE one.

An original creation, Julie Schurr's fusion of musical styling and technique is all her own: Indierockbitchfolk. She's been showcasing it to her fans in St. Louis and Detroit, winning loyal converts. Now that she's finished her degree & produced a full-length album, she just can't imagine any other career path. So it's a good thing that album sales are steadily rising and venues keep opening their doors.

Julie will be out on tour and finishing up her 2nd album, which is planned for release in early 2008.

Julie Schurr has headlined Pride and Coming Out day celebrations around the country and has been featured on Curvemag.com and in the Advocate. Her two hour performance will include acoustic music from her current album as well as her unique style of audience participation and comedy. Show tour locations listed below.

Eureka Springs, Arkansas Feb 9 2008 10:00P Lumberyard Bar and Grille	Baton Rouge, Louisiana Feb 15 2008 8:00P Hound Dog's - Time TBA
Fayetteville, Arkansas Feb 10 2008 8:30P Common Grounds	New Orleans, Louisiana Feb 16 2008 9:30P Station 8801

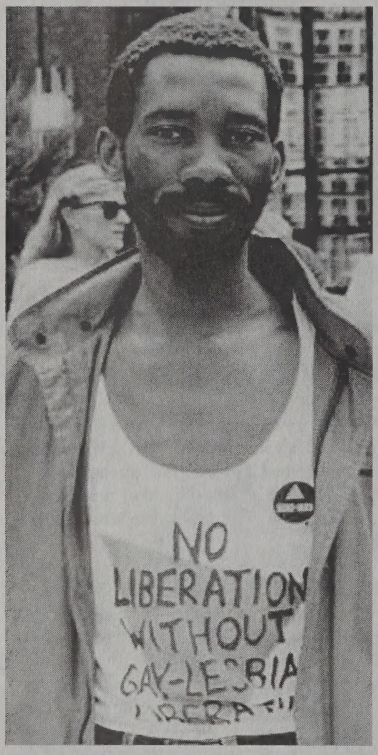
More information on Julie can be found online at: www.julieschurr.com or www.myspace.com/julieschurr.

Past Out

by Liz Highleyman

Past Out, which looks at the life of South African gay activist Simon Nkoli.

Who was Simon Nkoli?



Through his dedication and courage, black gay anti-apartheid activist Simon Tseko Nkoli played a key role in the fight for GLBT liberation and human rights for people with HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

Nkoli was born in Soweto in November 1957. He spent part of his childhood living with his grandparents, tenant farmers on a white estate, before moving to Sebokeng township to join his mother and stepfather.

Nkoli became an anti-apartheid activist at a young age. After multiple arrests for civil disobedience, including participation in the Soweto student uprising in the summer of 1976, he joined the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the African National Congress (ANC), and the United Democratic Front (UDF). Fellow COSAS members debated removing him from his position of regional secretary when his sexual orientation became known, but a large majority ultimately voted in his favor.

Long aware of his same-sex attractions, Nkoli began his first serious relationship at age 19, with a white bus driver. After Nkoli revealed this to his mother, she sent him to a series of local healers, a Christian priest, and finally a psychologist, who turned out to be gay himself and advised the lovers to live together - even if Nkoli had to pose as his partner's servant to evade racial segregation laws.

In his early 20s, after coming out in an interview with a black newspaper, Nkoli joined the newly formed Gay Association of South Africa (GASA), which consisted mostly of middle-class white men. Resolutely apolitical, the group resisted Nkoli's requests to hold social events at nonsegregated venues, leading him to form the Saturday Group, the country's first black gay organization, in 1984.

Around the same time, amid growing racial discord, Nkoli stepped up his anti-apartheid activism, helping organize a tenant rent strike in the town of Delmas. Charged with killing a man by throwing a rock during a protest, Nkoli was arrested, tortured, and imprisoned. Along with 21 other black activist leaders, he was tried in 1986 for the capital crimes of subversion, conspiracy, and treason.

While in prison awaiting trial, Nkoli revealed his homosexuality to his co-defendants - ANC and UDF members who would later hold high-level positions in the post-apartheid government - and they came to respect and support him as a gay man. "This country will never protect the rights of its gay and lesbian citizens unless we stand up and fight - even when it makes us unpopular with our own comrades," he later wrote. Nkoli came out more publicly during the trial, when he used his attendance at a GASA meeting as an alibi to counter claims that he had been present at a clandestine political meeting. In 1988, the charges against him were dropped and he was released.

During his imprisonment, Nkoli became a cause celebre for gay rights activists around the world, but he received minimal support from the accomodationist GASA. This stance led the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) to suspend GASA for its failure to condemn apartheid, and the latter group soon collapsed.

After his release, Nkoli co-founded the Gay and Lesbian Organization of the Witwatersrand - the country's first genuinely integrated GLBT organization - and later the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (now the Lesbian and Gay Equality Project). "I am black and I am gay," he proclaimed at the first South African Pride march in 1990. "I cannot separate the two parts of me into secondary or primary struggle. They will be all one struggle." Nkoli traveled widely speaking about the situation in his country, served as an ILGA board member representing Africa, and earned numerous honors for his work.

Nkoli's anti-apartheid activism and ties with movement leaders proved instrumental in winning the ANC's support for gay rights. In 1994, he met with Nelson Mandela, whose election as president marked the end of the apartheid era. As the newly integrated country crafted its constitution, Nkoli lobbied for sexual orientation to be included in its anti-discrimination provisions, and also argued for repeal of sodomy laws. In 1996, South Africa became the first country to include explicit constitutional protection for GLBT people. A decade later, in fulfillment of a court mandate based on the constitution, the South African parliament legalized same-sex marriage.

Yet even as the gay movement gained strength and the apartheid regime crumbled, the AIDS epidemic reached crisis proportions in the 1990s, reintensifying racism and homophobia. Having been diagnosed with HIV himself (likely contracted in prison), Nkoli turned his focus to AIDS activism, co-founding groups including the Positive African Men's Project and the Township AIDS Project.

As the decade wore on, Nkoli experienced increasing bouts of ill health; he died of an AIDS-related infection on November 30, 1998, in the company of his long-time partner, Roderick Sharp. Though Nkoli himself was not able to benefit from effective new HIV drugs, his work for universal treatment access inspired fellow gay and anti-apartheid activist Zackie Achmat to form the Treatment Action Campaign, which today is widely regarded as the strongest AIDS activist group in the world.

DNC ELECTS RECORD NUMBER OF LGBT MEMBERS TO 2008 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION STANDING COMMITTEES

Appointments Reflect Strength, Diversity and Energy of Democratic Party

DENVER, CO (P/R) __ The Executive Committee of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) unanimously elected DNC Chairman Howard Dean's nominations for the Chairs and members of the 2008 Democratic National Convention Standing Committees, including a record number of openly LGBT members. Dean's LGBT appointments include Dr. Marjorie Hill of the Gay Men's Health Crisis organization in New York, Diego Sanchez from AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts, State Representative Patricia Todd of Alabama, and Ingrid Duran of Virginia to serve on the Platform Committee, along with Claire Lucas and Evan Low of California to the Rules Committee and Bob Rogan of Vermont to the Credentials Committee. In addition to appointing a record number of LGBT standing committee members, Dean was also the first DNC chair to appoint a member of the transgender community to a Convention committee.

The Standing Committees of the Convention are responsible for reviewing Convention business and formulating recommendations for consideration by Convention delegates. The Executive Committee's vote took place during the panel's recent meeting in Denver, site of the four-day Convention in August.

"The record turnout and enthusiasm we've seen for our Democratic candidates is a clear sign that Americans trust Democrats to bring much needed change to our country," said Governor Dean. "These outstanding leaders reflect the great strength, diversity and energy of the Democratic Party, and I'm confident their efforts will ensure our Convention in Denver is reflective of our shared values and our nominee's vision for America."

The elections included the Chairs and 25 Party Leader and Elected Official (PLEO) members of the three Convention Standing Committees: Credentials, Platform and Rules. Each committee has a total of 186 members. An additional 161 members elected by each of the states' and territories' Convention delegations will join Governor Dean's appointments to the committees later this spring.

For a full list of and biographical information on the Chairs and PLEO members from each Standing Committee, visit http://www.demconvention.com/a/standingcommittees.pdf .

Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee is charged with coordinating issues around the selection of delegates and alternates to the Convention and will likely meet in the summer. The committee will issue a report that is the first official item of business at the Convention.

Platform Committee

The Platform Committee is responsible for drafting and recommending a proposed National Platform for approval at the Convention. After conducting hearings and forums to collect testimony on issues and policies to potentially include in the platform, the committee is likely to meet sometime in July.

Rules Committee

The Rules Committee is responsible for proposing the Permanent Rules for the Convention, adopting the proposed Convention agenda and making recommendations for permanent Convention officers - all addressed as the second official item of business at the Convention. The committee will meet sometime in August, prior to the Convention.

Huckabee links gay sex to bestiality, abortion to slavery

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Republican presidential hopeful and former Baptist pastor Mike Huckabee linked gay sex to bestiality and abortion to slavery in an interview Thursday, explaining why, if elected, he would try to amend the constitution.

"Marriage has ... as long as there's been human history, meant a man and a woman in a relationship for life. Once we change that definition, then where does it go from there?" he asked in an interview with online "Beliefnet" magazine.

"Well, I don't think that's a radical view, to say we're going to affirm marriage. I think the radical view is to say that we're going to change the definition of marriage so that it can mean two men, two women, a man and three women, a man and a child, a man and animal," he added.

"The Bible was not written to be amended. The Constitution was," he said, announcing his intention to amend the document if he were to be elected president in November to ban abortion and establish that life begins at the moment of conception.

Leaving it up to individual states to outlaw abortion within their own borders is not enough, he said.

"That's again the logic of the Civil War -- that slavery could be okay in Georgia but not okay in Massachusetts. Obviously we'd today say, 'Well, that's nonsense. Slavery is wrong, period. It can't be right somewhere and wrong somewhere else.' Same with abortion," Huckabee said.

Huckabee won the Iowa Republican caucuses earlier this month, the first contest in the race for each party's nomination to run for the White House. He is in second place behind Arizona Senator John McCain in opinion polls for Saturday's primaries in South Carolina.

2008 THE YEAR TO WIN
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

Photo by: Bill Gaddis

At the wine bar with Devre Jackson

Cabernet Sauvignon

Brief history

Cabernet Sauvignon, like all noble wine grape varieties, is of the species Vitis vinifera, and genetic studies in 1997 indicated it is the result of a cross between Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc.

Cabernet Sauvignon is most directly associated with the wines of Bordeaux, and especially those of its Left Bank, which includes the top tier appellations of St.-Estephe, Pauillac, St.-Julien, and Margaux, among others. It makes up the majority portion of the blends of all of the Grand Cru wines of the 1855 classification. In Bordeaux, blending is common with the other allowable varietals: Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Pettit Verdot, and Malbec. Cabernet Sauvignon is also cultivated in other areas in France, notably Languedoc-Rousillon, and has great acclaim the world over.

California is after Bordeaux as the world's largest grower of Cabernet Sauvignon. This grape is found mostly in the Napa Valley and Sonoma County. In California, the area of Cabernet Sauvignon planting doubled in the 1990s. As in Bordeaux, it is often blended with Merlot and Cabernet Franc to produce world-class wines. The grape has also found a home in Washington, in vineyards like the Red Mountain in the lower Yakima Valley.

In late 2006, the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology published the result of studies conducted at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine that showed the beneficial relationship of Cabernet Sauvignon in reducing the risk factors associated with Alzheimer's disease. The study showed that resveratrol, a compound found in all red wine, can reduce levels of amyloid beta peptides, which attack brain cells and are part of what causes Alzheimer's. In short, we wine enthusiasts can enjoy drinking to our good health.

Varietal distinction

Cabernet Sauvignon has a well defined aroma. In Old World wines, particularly those made in Bordeaux, this is characterised by a smell of blackcurrant, cedar and spice. New World wines of this grape are more often dominated by aromas of chocolate, berries, oak, pepper and earth. In Australia, there is often a strong smell of eucalyptus, particularly in wines made in Coonawarra. One of the most characteristic aromas of warm-climate examples is cassis (blackcurrant).

Food parings

With such a wide assortment of foods to choose from, it's tough to know what to bring to a wine tasting. A good rule of thumb/ delicate meals need a light wine. Heavier meals need a bigger wine. Cabs generally go well with game, pate, beef roasts, spicy poultry, sausages, pasta, steaks, meat stews and beef roasts. The variety and quality of cheeses like cheddar & blue cheese can simulate a virtual gourmet meal.

Mr. D's ½ case

Cliff Lede Claret '04
www.CliffLedevineyards.com

Complex aromas of fig, mulberry and cassis from the nose are layered on top of a clove/ hazelnut finish.

Lees-Fitch Cabernet '06
www.TOGwines.com

At nearly $10 a bottle/ drinks like a cab twice the cost. This Cabernet presents itself with a nose of bourbon-soaked cherries with a finish of chocolate and cedar.

Magnificent Wine Company House Wine Columbia Valley '05
www.MagnificentWine.com

Cabernet Sauvignon 54%, Merlot 30%, Syrah 11%, Malbec 3%, Franc 2%
Great blend and for the price, it's hard to beat.

Cono Sur Cab/ Carmenere Chile '06
www.ConoSur.com

This organic wine offers a robust, fruit- filled nose of raspberry & plum.
The palate reveals a flavorful nutty taste and has a long finish.

Darioush Duel Napa '04
www.darioush.com

A blend of Cabernet and Shiraz
Enticing aromas of blackberry with a coffee bean and a finish of nutmeg & white pepper best describe this wine.

Irony Cabernet Napa '03
www.IronyWine.com

This is a bold and complex wine, which reflects the melding of unique characteristics from prime vineyards in several different Napa appellations. Tobacco, cocoa and bright red berry characters make this a red wine to enjoy.

And as always, I say go to your favorite wine shop, ask questions and purchase a bottle or two. Share some food & wine with friends and check it out for yourself.

A vortre sante'

Mr. D also hosts wine & food events as the Wine Enthusiasts of Tulsa.

Ciao

"Gay Travelers" OKLAHOMA CITY

"OUT OF TOWN" Savannah, Georgia

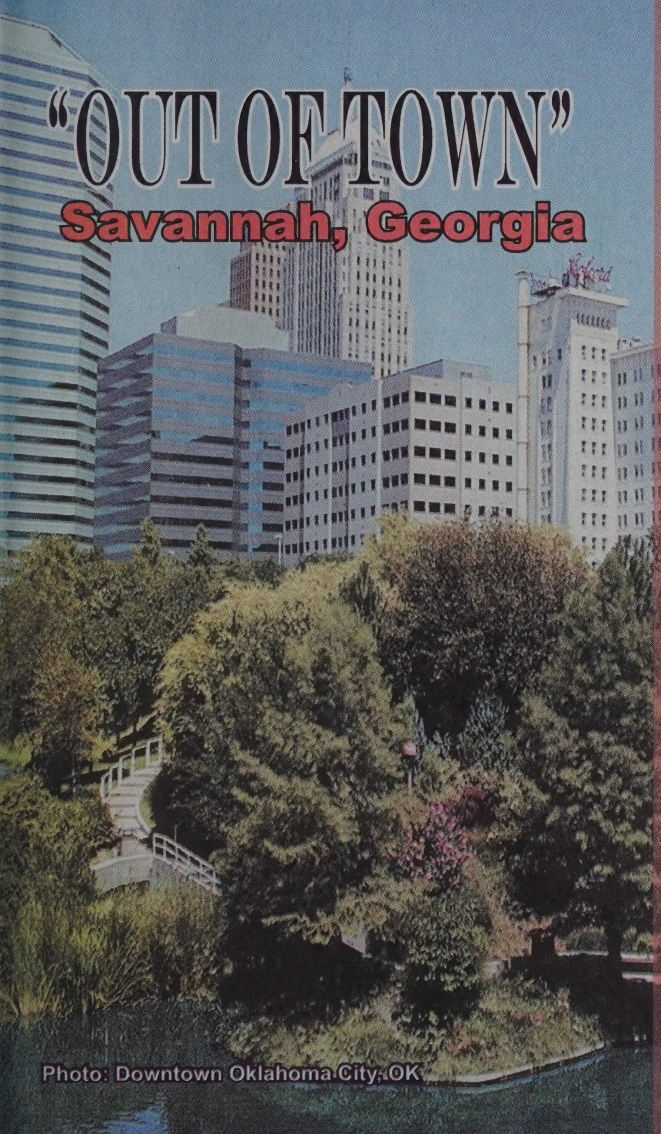


Photo: Downtown Oklahoma City, OK

Dining In or OUT

with Donald & Ray

Featuring Cuisine From Coast to Coast

This months recipe courtesy of:

TA-BOO' RESTAURANT
Palm Beach, Florida

Ta-boo's Frozen Cappucino

3/4 ounces Kahlua
3/4 ounces Bailey's Irish Cream
1 espresso (tall)
1 scoop vanilla ice cream
1/2 cup ice

Blend all ingredients at high speed.
Serve in a large red wine glass.
Top with whipped cream and drizzle some Kahlua to finish.

More on TA-BOO' Restaurant Palm Beach, Florida see page 22.

OUT ON VACATION

"Traveling In OUR FABULOUS WORLD"

by Donald Pile and Ray Williams

OKLAHOMA CITY- HABANA INN

In our travels to both the East Coast and the West Coast everyone always asks the same question to us. Where to party in the Midwest? We always tell them the best two places to party areTulsa and Oklahoma City. It is hard for most people on both coast to believe, but unless you have been there you certainly will not believe that in the Bible belt of Oklahoma is this fabulous gay mecca. Last month we told you about Tulsa and this month we are telling you about Oklahoma City. We have been going to Oklahoma City to party for over 25 years. The HABANA INN Resort has been a gay resort for over 25 years. It is the Midwest's largest all gay resort. A two story complex with over 175 rooms, most of which face one of the two swimming pools. The rooms are spacious and very inexpensive. It is a totally gay resort. Lush tropical plants and trees surround the pool areas. Gays from all over the midwest as well as both coasts have been going there for years, and it is busy 7 days a week, not just on weekends. Lounge around the pool area and you are sure to meet that "someone special". They are located 2200 NW 39th Expressway and their toll free number is 1.800.988.2221.

Within the resort complex they have a wonderful restaurant "Gushers" which has a great ambiance and serves delicious food, and is reasonable priced. The restaurant overlooks one of the pool areas so you can enjoy the boys frolicking in the pool as you are dining. They also offer sandwiches, soups, salads, pastas and appetizers, and a breakfast menu is available on weekends.

There are three bars in the Habana Inn complex which are completely different. COPA is a dance, disco and drag bar. Weekly they have male dancers, drag shows and comedians. FINISHLINE is a country/western bar with plenty of country dancing. This is the place to see the real cowboys and cowgirls in action. THE LEDO is a quiet piano bar. All the bartenders are super friendly and they all know how to make out of towners feel right at home. The owner of the bars and restaurant is to be commended for his outstanding job of always having "theme" nights and specials. The nights we were there, Long neck bottle beer was two for one. When so many bar owners just sit back and wait for customers to come in, this owner attracts customers by having specials, etc. Why can't all bar owners do things like this. Just a couple doors away from the Habana Inn is ANGLES at 2117 N.W. 39th St.. Their website is: www.anglesclub.com

Also in the resort is JUNGLE RED, an adult gift shop with magazines, videos, cards, gifts, leather, Pride items plus a lot of decorative items for the home.

Within a block of the Habana Inn resort you will find about 4 more gay bars catering to different tastes. A major grocery store is just one block away as are several other restaurants. A cab ride from the airport costs less than $20.00. The HABANA INN resort is located one block west of the intersection of Penn and Interstate I-44 and is easy to find.

Plus, there are a lot of sights to see in Oklahoma City. The Cowboy Hall of Fame has artifacts from the early cowboy days thru the television shows with lots of oil paintings, watercolors and bronzes. The Oklahoma City Memorial where the bombing took place a few years ago is a MUST to see. Art galleries and museums are plentiful. About 80 miles to the west is the Route 66 Museum which is extremely interesting.

For more information on Gay Oklahoma City, go to: www.habanainn.com and the Convention and Visitor's Center at www.okccvb.org . Also pickup a copy of The STAR Magazine, Oklahoma's Gay News and Entertainment paper.
Website: www.ozarksstar.com

Always remember to have fun when traveling, meet new people and talk to everyone!

OUT ON VACATION

"Traveling In OUR FABULOUS WORLD"

by Donald Pile and Ray Williams

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES both Good and Bad !

Traveling around the country as we do, we get to meet so many wonderful, exciting and interesting people. Herb and Peter at the Grand Resort and Spa (www.grandresort.net) in Ft. Lauderdale are two of the most professional gentlemen that we have ever met at a Resort. They are on top of everything and that is why they have guests returning all the time. We have met several guests who have stayed there over a dozen times. The Grand Resort and Spa is the ONLY place to stay in Ft. Lauderdale. And when in Ft. Lauderdale, stop by the Hi-Life Cafe and meet Carlos and Chuck the owners. Treat yourself to a wonderful experience in fine dining. Their website is: www.hilifecafe.com. In New York, the FABULOUS Jean-Claude Baker owns Chez Josephine Restaurant and no trip to the Big Apple would be complete without dining there at least once. Their website is: chezjosephine.com. Then drive on up to Ogunquit, Maine and stay at the Moon Over Maine Bed and Breakfast (http://www.moonovermaine.com/), The owner John has the best B and B in New England. So cozy and homey! Located just a block from downtown we always enjoy staying there.

If your heading Southwest, then stop by and stay at the Luna Vista B and B near Sedona, Arizona, (www.lunavistabandb.com) The owners, Kala and Frank are two of our very favorite people in the whole wide world! They certainly know how to make their guests come back again and again and again. Of all the places we have stayed they are by far the most gracious hosts! Drive on down to Tucson and stay at the Royal Elizabeth B and B, www.royalelizabeth.com. Jeff and Chuck are the owners. Their B and B is right downtown. Drive even more South to Hereford, Arizona and stay at the Casa de San Pedro, www.bedandbirds.com. Owners Karl and Patrick will tell you everything and anything about the area. You will see more birds than you have ever seen in your life! For a great get-a-way, check it out. When traveling in Northern Arizona, check out the Inn at 410, www.410.com in Flagstaff. Gordon and Kimball have the most unusual and exciting, beautiful large rooms in the B and B. Their rooms are featured in a book on bedrooms around the world!

In San Francisco, we love the 24 Henry House B and B and the Village House B and B, www.24henry.com, both owned by Walter. The Village House is located just a half block from Castro on 18th St. and you just cannot get any closer to all the action. In Seattle, Steve owns the Gaslight Inn B and B, gaslight-inn.com and it is within walking distance to all the gay bars. He has been in business a long time and knows how to do it well.

And in Palm Springs, we always stay at the Terrazzo, www.terrazzo-ps.com. Tom and Doug are simply the best at what they do. We have met many guests who have been staying with them for years! And of course our favorite place to dine in Palm Springs is Melvyn's Restaurant, www.inglesideinn.com, at the Ingleside Inn in downtown Palm Springs. Owner, Mel Haber is just simply "The Best" as is his Maitre D', Brian. It is as close to perfection 100% of the time as you will ever get in a restaurant. A special "THANKS" to both Mel and Brian for keeping the elegance in dining.

And just what do all of these owners have in common? They all enjoy what they are doing and they do it well. They don't skimp on anything. Whether accommodations or food they KNOW that their clients deserve the best and that is what they all provide. They do anything and everything possible to provide a fabulous experience for their guests, and by doing so, word of mouth gets around and they get more clients.

We get dozens of letters and emails from our readers asking if we ever have problems with any thing in our travels and of course the answer is "yes".. When traveling, one can only assume that all is going to go right all the time but of course that just isn't possible. However most of the time, life in our Fabulous World, is just that! "Fabulous" ! And thanks to the business owners above, and for many others, we can only say "Thanks for the memories" for this past year and we look forward to many more in 2008.

And now we would like to talk about some things relating to some of the "bad adventures" that we have encountered while traveling and about restaurants, resorts/ B and B's and bars. It is a mean cruel world out there when traveling and one just has to be very careful but when something goes wrong, one must ALWAYS have a "plan B" in place.

For the very worst B and B that we have ever stayed, it has to be the Bunkhouse Lodge in Breckenridge, Colorado. It is located about 70 miles West of Denver. What should have been a wonderful experience started off BAD and went downhill real fast. It has to be one of the dirtiest and most untidy places that we have ever seen! With dust and cobwebs everywhere. And they have the audacity to make you take off your shoes when you enter the front door! One night was too much for us and we left bright and early the next morning before breakfast. We didn't feel like partaking in that! They have a horrible reputation with the Denver crowd as well as travelers all over the country. They have been in business a long time however. A little "sleeze" is one thing but being dirty is not acceptable.

In Ft. Lauderdale, Florida a few years ago, we stayed at the gay-owned Gigi's Resort by the Beach. Advertised as the closest gay resort to the beach and, visiting their website, we just knew that this was the place for us to stay. WRONG ! It was filthy! The bathroom was a total disaster and we even found a used condom under the bed. Ugh! After one night, we hurriedly checked out and found another place to stay.

In St. Petersburg, Florida, the Suncoast Resort advertised itself as being the largest gay resort in the country. Upon checking in (and out of a hundred rooms, only 12 were booked) we found our room to be dreadful with torn wallpaper peeling from the walls, broken chairs, ripped carpeting, etc. How did they possibly think that they could survive? When they first opened, they had a restaurant, 4 bars, a gift shop but they all quickly pulled out. It is now closed and somebody else is trying to take over however they also seem to be

.....Continued page 23

Downtown Savannah's historic district is abundant with fine shops and restaurants, including the innovative Sapphire Grill, one of the city's top eateries. (Photo by Andrew Collins)

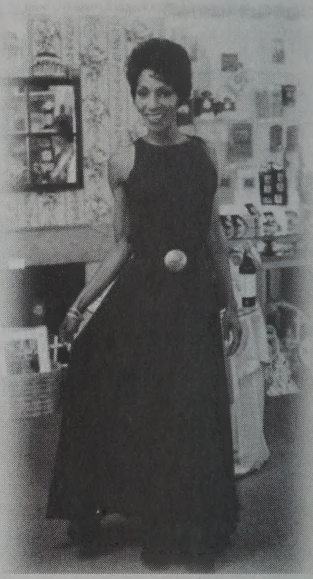
Savannah, Georgia

After years of lagging behind nearby Charleston in popularity, historic Savannah soared to new heights in the '90s and remains one of the nation's hottest destinations. Much of the city's renaissance had do to with the staggering popularity of John Berendt's best-seller, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, whose droll yet salacious account of Savannah society propelled the city into a gay hotspot almost overnight.

The jewel of Georgia's lazily enchanting seacoast, Savannah was founded in 1733 by British General James Oglethorpe, who designed the perfect grid of streets and grassy tree-shaded squares for which this city of 130,000 is still famous. Savannah prospered as a silk exporter during its first century, before developing into one of the world's major cotton suppliers. Much of downtown consists of elaborate brick and stucco Victorian buildings built following an 1820 fire that destroyed many of the city's beautiful wood-frame Colonial homes. Had General Sherman not spared Savannah during his notorious and destructive "March to the Sea," most of these Victorian structures would also have been burned.

Begin your explorations of the city inside the restored 1860s rail terminal that houses both the Savannah Visitor Information Center and the Savannah History Museum. This complex is at the southwestern edge of historic downtown. From here it's a short walk north to City Market, a three-block pedestrian mall with a handful of gay-friendly shops and restaurants. Downtown Savannah's shopping scene continues to evolve from traditional to fashion-forward - a Marc by Marc Jacobs flagship store opened here in April 2007, and many contemporary boutiques and art galleries now line the city's oak-shaded streets.

Near City Market, you'll find the gay disco, Club One, which is the performing home of The Lady Chablis, who figured so prominently in The Book, as Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil is commonly referred to by locals. Plenty of folks come to Savannah to seek out the sites that were brought to life in this mesmerizing tale (although it is nonfiction, The Book reads like a delicious novel). Of particular note is the privately owned Mercer House, in which Midnight's central figure, antiques dealer Jim Williams, shot and killed his young lover, Danny Hansford, in 1981 (the question of whether Williams fired in self-defense or as a calculated act of murder is debated to this day).



Its literary fame - or notoriety - notwithstanding, Savannah still rivals any Southern destination for its bedazzled and meticulously restored house museums. If you have time for only one, visit the Owens-Thomas House, a splendid 1819 Regency mansion built by renowned British architect William Jay. Nearby is the Isaiah Davenport House, an 1815 Federal beauty. To see a fine collection of classical sculpture and Impressionist painting, visit the Telfair Mansion and Art Museum, a memorable 1818 structure in its own right. In 2006, the museum expanded with the construction of the striking new Jepson Center for the Arts, which added more galleries and exhibition space.

At the north end of the historic district, the city's riverfront is lined with a stately row of restored cotton warehouses - now containing a slew of touristy businesses - and a cobbled lane that's sits a full flight of steps below the rest of the city. The best time to appreciate it and the views of the bridge and freighters chugging along the Savannah River is in the morning, when you'll encounter few crowds. One great way to explore downtown and get some advice on the local gay scene is to take a guided walk with knowledgeable local Jonathan Stalcup, who runs Architectural Tours of Savannah.

For dining, avoid most of the mediocre eateries by the river and stick to one of the several local favorites, virtually all of them gay-friendly. One of the most famous restaurants in the South, Elizabeth on 37th specializes in subtly sublime regional cooking,

such as sesame-almond-crusted grouper with peanut sauce; and grilled rack of lamb with corn pudding, stewed okra, and tomatoes. Sexy and sophisticated Sapphire Grill serves some exciting and innovative contemporary American fare - consider the jumbo lump crab cake with lemon curd, green-zebra tomatoes, and red chard.

A bit more affordable, chic Il Pasticcio presents contemporary Northern Italian cuisine - try the grilled gorgonzola-crusted filet mignon with a potato-pancetta gratin. Olde Pink House is one of those Savannah traditions that everybody should experience at least once - fine Continental fare with regional twists, like black grouper stuffed with blue crab and a Vidalia onion sauce, is served. Garibaldi's, in an 1870s firehouse, prepares simple but very good Italian fare, such as pesto shrimp with angel hair pasta. For either lunch or dinner, the trendy City Market Cafe is a dependable choice, serving delicious wild mushroom, blue cheese, and prosciutto salad, as well as terrific thin-crust pizzas.

It's touristy, but fans of Food Network TV star Paula Deen won't want to pass up a chance to dine at her downtown Savannah restaurant, The Lady & Sons, known for its down-home Southern cuisine. An elegant basement space with a youthful, see-and-be-seen following, Jazz'd Tapas Bar is perfect for late-night snacking - recommended fare include potato-leek frittata with fig chutney, and citrus-ginger-glazed shrimp-and-scallops skewers. The lesbian-owned Firefly Cafe serves affordable American fare, including plenty of fresh veggie dishes. This dapper spot overlooks Troup Square and is especially popular for brunch (try the Savannah eggs Benedict topped with fresh crab meat). For post-club noshing, check out Sushi Zen, a hip and gay-popular Asian restaurant with a convivial vibe.

The bar staff and regulars in Savannah's bars are friendly and forward. Although some locals shun the touristy and cavernous Club One, it's one of the most impressive clubs in the Southeast, and it can be fun when The Lady Chablis is performing. Other options include Chuck's, a friendly locals joint near the river that draws a mixed bunch; and Blaine's Back Door Bar, a casual cruise and dance lounge that also has a deli serving pretty tasty sandwiches and pizza. Not gay per se, Venus de Milo is a sexy and sophisticated wine bar with a welcoming, bohemian vibe - it's just west of City Market. Down along the riverfront, gay-friendly Kevin Barry's Irish Pub is popular early in the evening for Irish music, food, and drink.

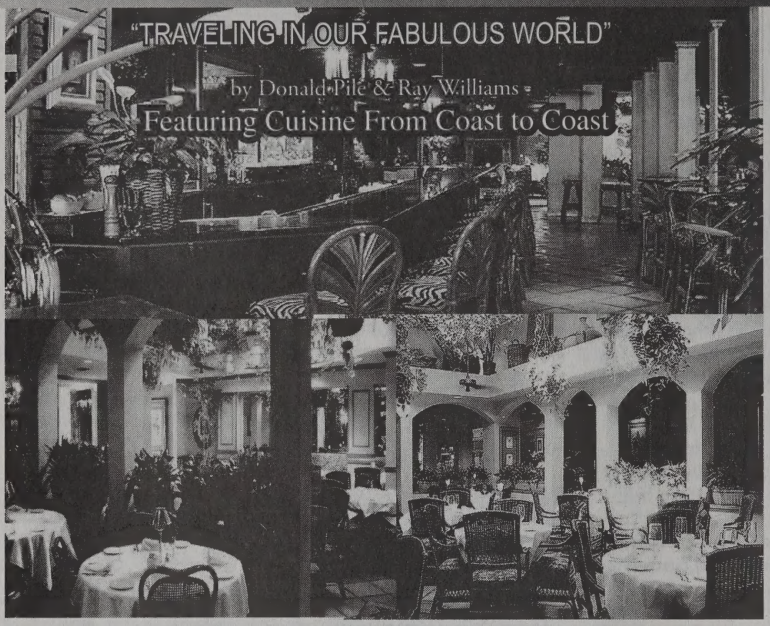
With the recent rise in gay tourism, Savannah's grand old hotels have become increasingly hospitable to visiting same-sex couples. Among the city's many classic luxury inns, the Ballastone Inn is renowned for its gracious hospitality and over-the-top, lavish rooms. The four-story 1838 mansion sits along one of the prettiest streets in the city. A mid-19th-century inn with an expansive landscaped courtyard, the Eliza Thompson House and its grand guest rooms look much as you might imagine they did when cotton was king of Savannah. Original heart-pine floors and period antiques impart a romantic ambience, and yet rooms have comfortable, modern amenities, especially the bathrooms. Rooms at the Foley House Inn contain antiques and Oriental rugs; many overlook Chippewa Square and have massive two-person Jacuzzis. Of affordable chain properties, the Comfort Suites Historic District is clean, pleasantly furnished, and a short walk from City Market.

The only GLBT-exclusive B&B in Savannah, 912 Barnard is also one of the least expensive. This dramatic yellow turn-of-the-century house has been handsomely restored to its original splendor, with antiques and authentic colors that convey the ambience of the city. A fully restored 1889 sea captain's house that once belonged to one of Savannah's wealthiest merchants, the Azalea Inn is quite gay-friendly. All rooms are configured and decorated differently, and each has a gas fireplace; two have whirlpool tubs, and two have balconies.

For the most memorable accommodations, however, look to the gay-friendly Mansion on Forsyth Park, which offers some of finest digs in town. This stylish mini-resort beside verdant Forsyth Park contains 126 rooms with smart, contemporary furnishings, plus a top-notch spa, a cooking school, two cool bars, an art gallery, and the highly regarded 700 Drayton Restaurant. Opened in 2005, the hotel offers further evidence of Savannah's gradual shift from a bastion of Old South gentility to a beacon of New South panache and style.

The Little Black Book

Azalea Inn (912-236-2707 or 800-582-3823, www.azaleainn.com). Ballastone Inn (912-236-1484 or 800-822-4553, www.ballastone.com). Blaine's Back Door Bar (912-233-6765, www.blainesbar.com). Chuck's (305 W. River St., 912-232-1005). Cafe at City Market (912-236-7133, www.savannahcitymarket.com/cafe). Club One (912-232-0200, www.clubone-online.com). Comfort Suites Historic District (912-629-2001, www.comfortsuites.com). Eliza Thompson House (912-236-3620 or 800-348-9378, www.elizathompsonhouse.com). Elizabeth on 37th (912-236-5547, www.elizabethon37th.net). Firefly Cafe (912-234-1971, www.fireflycafega.com). Foley House Inn (912-232-6622 or 800-647-3708, www.foleyinn.com). Garibaldi's (912-232-7118, www.garibaldisavannah.com). Il Pisticcio (912-231-8888, www.ilpasticciosavannah.com). Jazz'd Tapas Bar (912-236-7777, www.jazzdsavannah.com). Kevin Barry's Irish Pub (912-233-9626, www.kevinbarrys.com). Lady & Sons (912-233-2600, www.ladyandsons.com). Mansion on Forsyth Park (912-238-5158 or 888-711-5114, www.mansiononforsythpark.com). 912 Barnard (912-234-9121, www.912barnard.com). Olde Pink House (912-232-4286). Sapphire Grill (912-443-9962, www.sapphiregrill.com). Sushi Zen (912-233-1188, www.sushi-zensga.com). Savannah Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (877/SAVANNAH, www.savannahvisit.com). Venus de Milo (912-447-0901).



TA-BOO' RESTAURANT
Palm Beach, Florida

Located on Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, Florida, TA-BOO' is a real treat! Stretching four fabulous blocks from South Ocean Blvd. to Cocoanut Row on Palm Beach island, Worth Avenue is one of the world's most exclusive shopping districts. The Avenue boasts a sumptuous mix of more than 200 world-famous specialty shops, posh department stores, gourmet restaurants and art galleries. It is like the Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, California. A coat and tie (or ascot) is of course necessary even at lunch time. TA-BOO' has been in business for over 60 years. It has the classic ambiance of a private gentlemen's club brightened by Palm Beach's smart set, it atmosphere is both comfortable and bustling all at the same time. Slowly spinning ceiling fans, tropical fishtail palms and leafy dangling porthos vines frame a mural of an ocean vita, complete with Miznetresque terra-cotta rooftops in the foreground. Down a terra-cotta pathway, the long bar is an Avenue tradition for a variety of patrons - from the burger and beer set to those with an affinity for a rack of lamb and a little Veuve Clicquot! A soothing marine aquarium illuminates the bar's neighboring bistro. Their menu covers the basics, from comfort food to top-notch cuisine. If you're dining for lunch, start with the sushi-quality carpaccio of tuna or try the ever-popular warm grilled chicken and pears salad. Dinner is all about Maine Lobster, white Dover sole meuniere, crispy roast mahogany duck and linguine with lump crab. Dessert is a MUST, particularly the signature "Ta-boo' lust", a sinful concoction of coconut cream filling and whipped cream atop a walnut cookie crust.

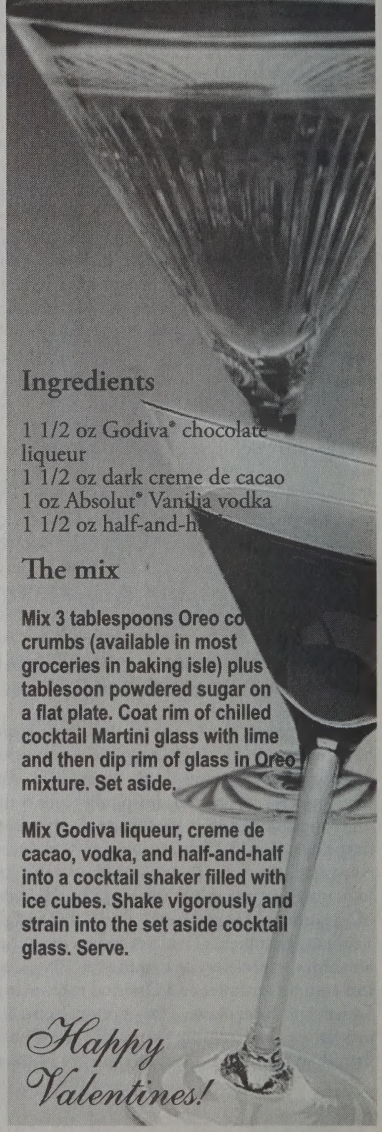
We always dine there at least once when we are in Florida and it does just keep getting better everytime! Owners Franklyn DeMarco and Nancy Sharigan are regular hosts. You never know what famous celebrities you will be dining with. We particularly enjoy their Swordfish.

Lunch is served from 11:30 AM to 5 PM and dinner is served from 5 PM to 10 PM weekdays and from 5 PM to 11 PM on Friday and Saturday. Sunday Brunch is served till 3 PM. They are located at 221 Worth Avenue and for reservations call: (561) 835-3500.

by mixologist Paul Wortman

Martini of the month

Death by Chocolate Martini



Ingredients

1 1/2 oz Godiva® chocolate liqueur
1 1/2 oz dark creme de cacao
1 oz Absolut® Vanilia vodka
1 1/2 oz half-and-h

The mix

Mix 3 tablespoons Oreo co crumbs (available in most groceries in baking isle) plus tablesoon powdered sugar on a flat plate. Coat rim of chilled cocktail Martini glass with lime and then dip rim of glass in Oreo mixture. Set aside.

Mix Godiva liqueur, creme de cacao, vodka, and half-and-half into a cocktail shaker filled with ice cubes. Shake vigorously and strain into the set aside cocktail glass. Serve.

Happy Valentines!

GAY TRAVELERS:
having a lot of financial problems as they at first were going to open mid-summer, then in the fall and now they don't know if they will open or not.

We booked an accommodation and in Denver a couple of years ago and when we got to the destination, we found that it was simply a condo unit with two bedrooms and the guy rented out one of the bedrooms! In South Dakota, we booked a reservation and when arriving, the owner gave up HIS bedroom for us and then he slept on the sofa!

Sometimes restaurants can also be a complete disaster. From being dirty, to rude servers, to bad food and service, it can always be interesting to say the least. But if you are not happy with a restaurant..... LEAVE ! We have walked out of dozens of restaurants. If there is one problem, then usually a second problem develops and before you know it you are in a mess up to your ears, so why not just leave before it gets worse? The worst thing we hate to hear from a server, is "Don't give me a hard time, I had a bad night last night". Who cares if the server had a bad night? They are there to "SERVE YOU" with a smile and with a professional attitude. We have at times paged the manager and requested that another server wait on us and we explain fully why. There are a lot of excellent servers in restaurants but we just simply won't accept bad service. If the food you ordered is not good nor cooked properly, quietly and gently tell your server the problem.

Bartenders can really be a pain in the ass sometimes. One bartender in Seattle doesn't like to wait on people sitting at the bar. Rather, you have to go to his station, order and get your drinks and then return to your bar stool. How crazy is that? We have had bartenders that didn't even know how to make a screwdriver! Most likely they didn't know how to make a Bourbon and 7 either! Other bartenders are eating or smoking while trying to wait on you. We simply tell them that when they are thru eating or thru with their smoke break, then they can take our order. If a bartender is behind the bar and smoking and serving us, we explain exactly why we are not leaving a tip! Fortunately more and more states are becoming non-smoking and that takes care of the problems. Having said this, we have found that most bartenders are friendly, fun, wonderful and professional and our hats off to all of them! They enjoy what they are doing and make great tips.

Websites can often be deceiving and indeed sometimes they are! Whenever possible and especially when booking accommodations, it is smart to check around to see if you know anybody that has actually stayed there. As far as restaurants or bars, it is easier to just walk out if there is a problem. You pay good money and you expect your money's worth. Most accommodations, restaurants and bars are run very professional. Their staff is professional and courteous and friendly. Don't you just love it when your traveling and everything goes smoothly? But once in a while it doesn't and you have a choice to make..... either accept it or do something about it. And it is YOUR choice! Life is to short to settle on anything less than fabulous!

Always remember to have fun when traveling, meet new people and talk to everyone!

TRAVELING IN OUR FABULOUS WORLD is written by Donald Pile and Ray Williams, Award-winning Celebrity travel columnists who write for gay publications from Coast to Coast. Proud members of the IGLTA. You can email them at: gaytravelers@aol.com or visit their webpage at: http://www.hometown.aol.com/gaytravelers

Community Marketing's 10 Most Visited Gay Destination's

At least one overnight stay by a non-resident Rank Destination
Percent who visited in the last 12 months

1 New York City, NY 16.0%
2 Las Vegas, NV 14.3%
3 San Francisco, CA 12.9%
4 Los Angeles/West Hollywood, CA 11.9%
5 Ft. Lauderdale/Wilton Manors, FL 10.5%
6 Palm Springs, CA 10.1%
7 Chicago, IL 9.2%
8 San Diego, CA 8.8%
9 Washington, DC 8.6%
10 Miami/ South Beach, FL (tie) 8.2%
10 Orlando, FL (tie) 8.2%

"Community Marketing's studies are unique in the tourism industry," McHugh said. "Other studies try to rank gay friendliness or popularity, but this study actually quantifies the bottom line: Where did gay and lesbian consumers go and spend their money?"

Most-Visited International DestinationsRank Destination
Percent who visited in the last 12 months

1 London 8.4%
2 Puerto Vallarta 7.6%
3 Paris 6.2%
4 Vancouver 6.1%
5 Montreal 5.9%
6 Toronto 5.6%
7 US Virgin Islands 5.1%
8 Cancun 5.0%
9 Puerto Rico 4.8%
10 Rome 4.7%

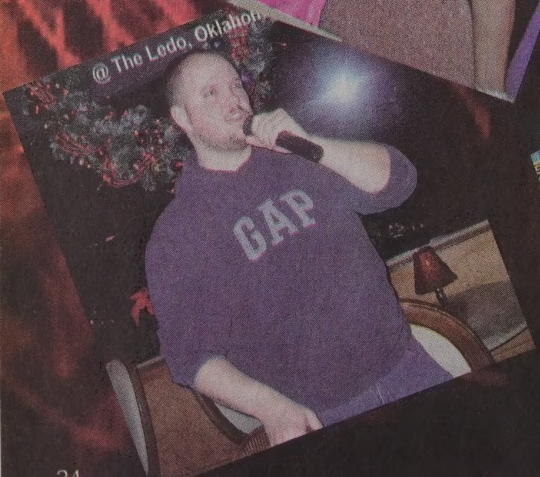
Respondents indicated that they chose leisure destinations because friends recommended them, they offer unique attractions, and are known for their gay-friendliness. "Clearly, when destinations show gay and lesbian visitors a good time, that is the best advertising investment they can make," said McHugh. "Word of mouth marketing is very powerful among the gay and lesbian community. It's not enough to slap a rainbow on an ad and call it a day. The most successful destinations work with their tourism and hospitality partners to earn that kind of loyalty and referral. This is accomplished through education, training, and offering a genuinely gay-welcoming social and political atmosphere."

Quotable Quotes

"Gayest Democratic convention ever?
A record 16 percent of delegates to the Democratic National Committee's platform committee for the Denver convention are LGBT", says Howard Dean.

Star Scene

Photo's by Chaz & Victor



By Greg Steele

Paparazzi on the prowl

"The Painted Ladies" Host Kris Kohl, Kennie Phillips, Miranda Ray and Domonique Daniels charged up the New Years Eve crowd at Downtown Plaza Hotel Tulsa's Jones N Club.

Oklahoma City's "Bloody Mary Saturday Club" having food, fun and lots to drink at their monthly bash. The January hosts where Rodney Burgamy and Joe Brennan, Century 21 Gold Castle moguls. The club has been meeting for 15 years.

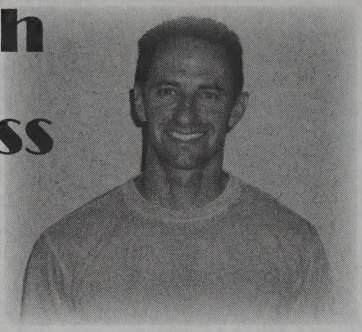
Cowboy Chase, hangin out at Steve's Hideaway Lounge Tulsa. Chase doesn't get to town often, but watch out when he does!

ABOVE: Tulsa Diva Tabitha Taylor and McAlester Crooner Matthew Heath Fitzgerald at the glamorous star studded Royal Barony of Oklahoma adornment ceremony. BELOW: Dallas Royalty among the many out of state guests in Tulsa to support the 1st Oklahoma Barony Czar and Czarina.

"I'm very honored to have the tag of Gay Icon" Quote from David Beckham, LA Galaxy Soccer Star. Photo part of a series of ad's for Emporio Armani.

Health & Fitness

By Ronald Blake



Exercise can make you bigger, stronger, and faster. These are the obvious results from a fertile regimen of physical activity. There are other benefits from exercise that are sure to have the neighbors stand up and take notice.

Exercise can stimulate new growth of neurons and even help you to keep the neurons that you possess. Neurons are those little things in your body that transport messages throughout your legs, arms, torso, and head. They are good to have around if you yearn to communicate and learn. This comes as good news to those of you who destroyed countless neurons in your previous existence as an irresponsible college student with that degree in undecided. There is hope for you debaucherous mongrels and physical activity is certainly one answer.

Faster reaction times can be attributed to exercise. You will be able to hit baseballs thrown at ninety-five miles per hour. You will be able to dodge bullets from Tony Soprano's goombahs. You will be able to more effectively bob and weave through the one-two combination of Oscar DeLaHoya. You might even be able to negotiate better in traffic on the 666 Freeway on your route to work on Mondays. Can I get an "amen" to more effective reaction times due to running, walking, and double-dutching?

Mental challenges become mere child's play in response to the dashing good looks of Mr. Exercise. Yes, exercise has been known to unravel the mysteries of the universe. Even Albert Einstein was spotted riding bicycles and frolicking along the ocean during his sojourn on this planet. These physical exertions were rumored to have led to his great theories on relativity. You might just settle for solving the complexities of a Rubik's cube or that set of instructions on putting your barbecue grill together.

Your memory can behold the effects of a good physical fitness program. There is a site in your brain called the hippo campus that can enlarge in mass and reap the goodness of jumping jacks and other means of physical activities. This enlargement of the hippo campus translates into better memory and possibly the ability to treat Alzheimer's patients. Think of all the time you waste trying to recall where you placed your cell phone, keys, black socks, or W2 form from work. Start using that wasted time on exercise that will jump start that short-term memory compartment.

Your mood can be positively impacted by the release of neurotrophins. These chemicals are released when you decide to participate in an active lifestyle. They rush into your system and make you feel happy and vivacious. Consider reaching for your roller blades instead of that sleeve of Girl Scout mints to turn that frown upside down the next time you are grumpy. Sunshine, lollipops, and rainbows everywhere will be your reward.

If we all reconvene in another five years, it is quite likely that ongoing research will show even more benefits of the brain and exercise combination. Keep sweating to the oldies with Richard Simmons and know that good things will always follow. A mind is a terrible thing to waste.

This column is brought to you by that guy who prefers to frame a collage of one dollar bills instead of framing that replica of "Starry Night" from Michaels. That guy is Ron Blake and he can be reached www.goblakefitness.com.

Gay men at greater risk from dangerous, drug-resistant 'superbug'

WASHINGTON __ A new drug-resistant strain of the "flesh-eating" MRSA bacterium is spreading quickly among gay men in Boston and San Francisco and soon could pose a wider threat, according to an article in The New York Times.

In a study published Monday by the journal Annals of Internal Medicine, researchers wrote that the MSRA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) bacteria were spread easily through anal intercourse, as well as by skin-to-skin contact and touching contaminated surfaces.

Unless laboratories can identify the strain and doctors prescribe appropriate antibiotics, the infection, researchers wrote, "has the potential for rapid nationwide dissemination" among gay men.

Another part of the study found that gay men in San Francisco were about 13 times more likely than other people to contract the bacteria. Symptoms can include abscesses and infection in the genital and buttock area, skin ulcers, pneumonia, heart damage and necrotizing fasciitis, the infection that gives the bacterium its popular name.

All MRSA bacteria are resistant to methicillin, but the new strain is also resistant to antibiotics used to treat earlier forms -- clindamycin, tetracycline and mupirocin.

MRSA infections that occur in otherwise healthy people who have not been recently (within the past year) hospitalized or had a medical procedure (such as dialysis, surgery, catheters) are known as community-associated (CA)-MRSA infections. These infections are usually skin infections, such as abscesses, boils, and other pus-filled lesions.

Nearly 19,000 people died nationwide from MRSA infection in 2005, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control.

For more info: www.cdc.gov

Row erupts in Australia over 'gay' Jesus play

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian church leaders have condemned a play shortly to open in Sydney depicting Jesus as a gay man who is seduced by Judas, a report said Sunday.

The play, named Corpus Christi, is due to open next month as part of the city's annual Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Sydney's Sun-Herald newspaper reported.

A senior Sydney churchman called the play "historical nonsense".

"It is deliberately, not innocently, offensive and they're obviously having a laugh about it," Robert Forsyth, Anglican bishop of South Sydney, was quoted saying.

Apart from the relations between Jesus and Judas, the play also features Jesus conducting a gay marriage between two apostles.

The play's director Leigh Rowney, who claims to be a Christian, accepted the play would offend some Christians but said he was keen to provoke debate about Christianity.

"I wanted this play in the hands of a Christian person like myself to give it dignity but still open it up to answering questions about Christianity as a faith system," Rowney was quoted saying.

Playwright Terrence McNally, who is gay, received death threats when the work was performed in the United States, the newspaper said.

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INTERNATIONAL GAY SCREENPLAY CONTEST - 10th ANNIVERSARY

HOLLYWOOD, CA (PR) __ The ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY CONTEST, a screenplay contest dedicated to the positive portrayal of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, trangender and queer individuals in film, celebrates it's 10th anniversary in 2008. Entries are now being accepted online and are limited to the first 300 for 2008. Executive Director, David Jensen, "We are excited to celebrate our 10th anniversary and are looking at a record number of entries this year. We are continually amazed with the quality of talent that comes through the door year after year." Jensen continues, "We receive entries from around the globe and Hollywood is taking notice in a very big way. Many of our past winners are now hard working screenwriters"

The ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY CONTEST has gained respect and notoriety from Hollywood studios, agents and producers. Entries for 2008 are being accepted online at: www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com

Prizes for 2008 include cash, industry exposure and merchandise. The 2008 One In Ten Screenplay Contest is sponsored by: Cherub Productions, Final Draft Inc., scr(i)pt magazine, www.inktip.com, www.TopFilmFestivals.com, www.Screenplay-Contests.com and Jungle Software.

The submission deadline for 2008 ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY CONTEST is September 1, 2008. Entry forms are available online through the contest website: www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com. Entry forms may also be obtained through the mail by sending a self addressed stamped envelope to:

CHERUB PRODUCTIONS
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Quotable Quotes

More than 90 percent of gays and lesbians vote in U.S. presidential elections, compared to 64 percent of straight citizens. Queer folk are twice as likely as straight folk to vote in midterm elections.

Community Marketing, Inc. (CMI), a leading LGBT market research company.

Q Scopes

by Jack Fertig

FEBRUARY 2008

"Charge your batteries, Aquarius!"

As Mercury lines up with the Sun in Aquarius, everyone is a bit more know-it-all and too damn clever for his or her own good. Try to be adaptive, open-minded, and a good listener, and you will be much smarter - however discreetly - than the people voicing their grand ideas.

ARIES (March 20 - April 19): Friends who seem relentless in urging you on are actually doing you a favor. You're capable of more than you realize. Going it alone would weaken you. Let them help you, and you'll go far!

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): Question authority, but pay attention to what those in power say. Expert advice needs some expansion and clarification, and asking for that will prove advantageous. Asking questions doesn't make you look foolish, but not asking them when you should will!

GEMINI (May 21 - June 20): You're itching for a power struggle. Playing it out in the bedroom can release that energy so your uppity impulses don't make trouble for you at work. Or focus and harness that energy more deliberately at work, if you can!

CANCER (June 21 - July 22): Your mouth is running way ahead of your brain and your good sense. Try to stick to places where a lack of inhibition and tasteful restraint can work to your favor. Anywhere else, slow down and think about what you're saying.

LEO (July 23 - August 22): Your partner - in life or in the moment - will offer some kinky new possibilities, expanding your erotic horizons. If your sweetie is drawing a blank in that department, start talking about tattoos and body art. Just discussing it should stimulate the imagination.

VIRGO (August 23 - September 22): New approaches at work can make your job more productive and enjoyable. You have some great ideas, but don't be so insistent on doing things your own way. Colleagues will offer surprising inspiration.

LIBRA (September 23 - October 22): A new approach to your favorite sport or hobby can make it a lot more fun and/or creative. Ask yourself how Mom or Granny would approach it, whether you choose to follow that example or take a diametrically opposite approach.

SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): If you can manage to have some fun with your family, you'll be amazed at what secrets will be revealed in the process. Stand your ground gently in arguments, agreeing to disagree, and even more will come out!

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 - December 20): Insisting that you're right only exposes more glaringly where you're wrong. Try to keep an open mind, and remember what basic principles are really important. Adapt with new conditions and new ideas to keep up!

CAPRICORN (December 21 - January 19): Adaptability is not only an enduring value, it is one of your sign's best attributes. New ideas that seem to be an affront to your sensibilities can prove very helpful, and will eventually affirm the values they seem to attack.

AQUARIUS (January 20 - February 18): You're getting a birthday bolt of fabulosity in which anything could happen, and you'll make sure it will. Thrive on the attention, but take a little time out to charge your batteries. Let yourself be surprised. Really surprised.

PISCES (February 19 - March 19): Working behind the scenes, especially in a charitable effort, will be to your advantage. The political connections will be obvious, but there will be more surprising benefits!

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is a founding member of the Association for Astrological Networking.

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Editorial Cartoon
By: Paul Berge

""A Marriage Made in Heaven?" which looks at Mike Huckabee's staunch support of the Federal Marriage Amendment.

WHY SOME PEOPLE THINK

VIRGINIA WOOLF

IS THE STATE'S OFFICIAL ANIMAL.

One of the world's most influential writers. Virginia Woolf. Novelist, not Canis lupus.

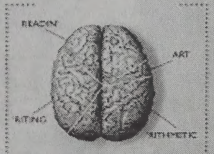
KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH ART THESE DAYS. Sort of explains why some might think Britain's most influential novelist is an East Coast predator. For the record, Virginia Woolf is not a fierce carnivorous mammal. Nor is she from Virginia.

Adeline Virginia Woolf was born in London in 1882. While her brothers attended school, she was educated at home. Only when the boys brought friends home from Cambridge University was the famed Bloomsbury Group formed with Virginia as the cornerstone. Here she escaped the conventions of society to freely explore philosophy, religion and art. With this freedom, Virginia went on to create the modern novel.

Virginia Woolf wrote legendary novels with opposable thumbs.

During the Post-Impressionist movement, Virginia was influenced to reject linear writing. Her most well-known novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, is a masterpiece in her "stream-of-consciousness" style. And still, more than three-quarters of a century after her death, she continues to inspire readers and writers around the world. Other than William Shakespeare, she is perhaps studied by more college students than any other author.

Art like Virginia Woolf's can transform lives. It pays off in more ways than you can imagine. In fact, the more art kids get, the more knowledgeable they become in subjects like math and science. The end result is that your well-rounded kid will become a well-rounded adult. For the Ten Simple Ways you can help instill more art in kids' lives, please visit AmericansForTheArts.org.



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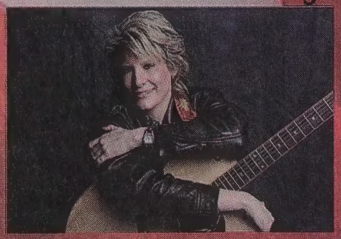
OpenArms Youth Project Needs Community Aide

During the Christmas Holiday; six youths became homeless after proclaiming that they were gay. These young people sought aide at Tulsa's O.Y.P..



Tracy Rice

Feb. 22, 2008 Tulsa's O.Y.P will host a benefit to continue assistance to these six young people and others who seek aide.

Canadian international singer/song writer, Tracy Rice, will perform at the O.Y.P. center, 2015 - B S. Lakewood, Tulsa, Ok.
Doors Open at 7:30pm. Showtime is at 8:00pm.. Tickets are $5

Tim Gillean and Ken Draper want to Thank all the performers who quickly organized shows during the Holidays. Club Maverick and New Age Renegades hosted these benefits.

Donations can be made to:
OpenArms Youth Project
2015 - B S Lakewood, Tulsa, OK 74112
To host a benefit for all these young people contact Tim or Ken, 918 - 838 - 7104

courtesy of Judy G photos, Tulsa, OK.

THE STAR MAGAZINE